

REMARKS

The applicants thank the examiner for the courtesies extended to the undersigned during the telephonic interviews on 7 and 8 November 2007 during which the Notice of Non-responsive Amendment was discussed.

As stated previously, the applicants respectfully request acknowledgement of the claim for priority under section 119 and notice that the certified copy of the priority document has been received.

According to the Notice of Non-responsive Amendment mailed on 2 November 2007, the amendment filed on 18 October 2007 was entered, but claims 1-2 and 8-21 were withdrawn from consideration for being directed to a non-elected invention.

The applicants strongly disagree with the examiner's assertion that the amendment of 18 October 2007 was non-responsive. The applicants strongly believe that the Notice of Non-responsiveness itself was improper because the examiner failed to identify an inadvertent omission or inadvertent lack of compliance with some requirement, and also because the amendment filed on 18 October 2007 was a *bona fide* attempt to address prosecution which addressed every issue presented by the examiner as required under 37 C.F.R. 1.111.

Further, the claims in the amendment of 18 October 2007 were not drawn to the unelected apparatus claims (canceled claims 3-7). Rather, the claims were directed to the elected method, and in any case were drawn to a single invention, which is the only requirement associated with the Definition of Restriction as articulated under, for example, MPEP 802.02.

The applicants also disagree with the examiner's assertion that the amended claims in reciting "a command" as opposed to "an external command" no longer require that an external command be received, and would not read on the original claimed invention. Particularly, such a

limitation would clearly read on the originally submitted claimed invention. For example, a claim to “a command” clearly reads on a claim to “an external command.”

During the interview on 7 November 2007, the examiner indicated that amending the independent claims to include recitation of the “external” command signal would result in claims readable on the elected invention. As discussed above, applicants believe the claims presented in the previous response read on the elected invention. Nonetheless, the applicants have canceled the previously presented claims and added new claims 22-35 which recite “external” command signal in order to further prosecution. Therefore, because new claims 22-35 are directed to the elected invention, the applicants respectfully requests examination of these claims.

The outstanding rejections will be discussed with respect to the new claims.

Claims 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,801,352 to Taneda *et al.* (hereafter: “Taneda”). The applicants will discuss this rejection with respect to new claim 22.

Claim 22 has been amended to recite novel features associated with an exemplary embodiment described, for example, on pgs. 8-12 of an output characteristic switching method for switching an output characteristic of a sensor device. Reference numerals are included only to aid discussion. The sensor device 2 receives a power supply voltage and outputs a detecting signal during a first sensing interval according to a first output characteristic or a second output characteristic. According to the method, a function of a terminal 8 of the sensor device is switched from receiving the power supply voltage and outputting the detecting signal to inputting an external command signal during an input interval. The output characteristics of the sensor device are switched to the one of the first output characteristic and the second output characteristic during a second sensing interval based on the command signal received through

the terminal during the input interval. For example, referring to the illustration in Fig. 2, when data sent from the microcomputer 20 to the terminal 8 is "00" in binary number, low pressure can be detected by using the characteristic line L1. Further, when the data sent from the microcomputer 20 is "01" in binary number, high pressure can be detected by using the characteristic line L2.

Thus, in accordance with the invention and unlike conventional systems, a mode switch is accomplished without the need for a separate mode switching terminal. Further, the output characteristic is switched based on the reception of an external command signal input to the terminal, which terminal reverts back to generating an output in accordance with the other output characteristic. In such a way, a device that receives the output characteristic can easily know the underlying value, such as, for example, pressure, with high precision.

Taneda, at best, describes a power supply unit for a discharge apparatus in which a gate voltage of a FET is controlled to increase ON resistance and prevent saturation when an increase in voltage is detected. Thus, a control operation for clamping an output voltage and for stopping the increase is performed. However, Taneda fails to disclose switching a function of a terminal of a sensor device from receiving power supply voltage and outputting the detection signal to inputting a command signal during an input interval. Rather, Taneda merely describes clamping and output during the stand-by time when inverted amplification (feedback) via a resistor in an operational amplifier is being carried out so that a constant state of feedback is maintained by the diodes. Accordingly, new claim 22 should be in condition of allowance.

Claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,344,492 to Hirano. The applicants will discuss this rejection with respect to new claims 22-23.

Hirano describes a weight machine including sensors 29 for detecting the weight of articles on the cradle 23 to produce an electric signal W indicative of the weight and applied through a zero correction device 31 to a central control unit 33 (See col. 3, lines 20-30). During operation, the zero point correction system puts the input weight signal of the adder circuit 43 at zero level when the weighing cradle is in a vacant state.

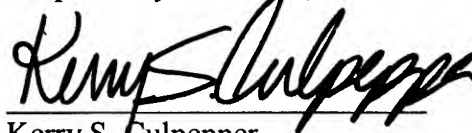
The examiner has pointed to Figs. 1-2 and claim 1 of Hirano in support of the rejection without specifying which portions allegedly disclose the recited limitations. However, Figs. 1-2 and claim 1 of Hirano do not disclose switching a function of a terminal of the sensor device from receiving the power supply voltage and outputting the detecting signal to inputting a command signal during an input interval. Rather, claim 1 merely describes output terminals of combination control means coupled to control terminal of switches, and discharging content from the output terminals for a predetermined period of time (See col. 7, lines 24-25 and 35-36). No command signal is input to the output terminals of the combination control means. Accordingly, new claims 22-23 should be in condition of allowance.

Support for new claims 24-35 can be found on, for example, pgs. 8-12 and in Fig. 3.

In view of the foregoing, the applicants submit that this application is in condition for allowance. A timely notice to that effect is respectfully requested. If questions relating to patentability remain, the examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone.

If there are any problems with the payment of fees, please charge any underpayments and credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 50-1147.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kerry S. Culpepper", written over a horizontal line.

Kerry S. Culpepper
Reg. No. 45,672

Posz Law Group, PLC
12040 South Lakes Drive, Suite 101
Reston, VA 20191
Phone 703-707-9110
Fax 703-707-9112
Customer No. 23400